

Referring now to Fig. 2, the tensioning arms 18 pivot upwardly about the axis 17 in accordance with the increasing diameter of the round bale 16, thereby matching the guiding arrangement for the belts 11 to the actual circumference of the round bale 16. Pivotal arms 19 are connected to the tensioning arms 18 to rotate therewith. A tension spring 21 for pulling the tensioning arm 18 into its lower end position at the beginning of the baling action is arranged between the pivotal arm 19 and a fixed mounting point 20 on the baler frame 9. The belts 11 are thereby placed in the requisite starting position for the baling process. A hydraulic cylinder 22 is mounted in a pivotal manner on the free end of the pivotal arm 19. The piston rod 23 of the hydraulic cylinder 22 is connected to an arm 24 of a double-armed bell crank 25. The bell crank 25 is pivotally mounted on a bearing 26 located on the sidewall of the tailgate 10. The other arm 27 of the bell crank 25 is connected to a latch or pawl 28, which is pivotal about an axis 29 in the lower region of the tailgate 10. The pawl 28 engages a fixed spigot or keeper 30, located on the frontal housing part 8. The tailgate 10 is thereby firmly locked to the frontal housing part 8 during the baling process. The force effective on the pawl 28 increases proportionately with the upward pivoting of the tensioning arm 18 as the diameter of the round bale 16 increases during the course of the baling action. Thus, the greatest locking force will occur at the heaviest load levels, thereby ensuring that the tailgate 10 will always be positively locked to the frontal housing part under any circumstances. Once the final size for the round bale 16 has been attained, pressure is applied to the hydraulic cylinder 22 so as to drive out the piston rod 23 and pivot the bell crank 25 towards a fixed stop 31 located below the arm 24 of the bell crank 25, as shown in Fig. 3. As a result, the pawl 28 is drawn upwardly, thereby releasing the locking mechanism to provide selective engagement. The tail gate 10 is thereupon pivoted upwardly about the pivotal axis 32 by the effective torque provided by the hydraulic cylinder 22 so as to release the round bale 16 which is then deposited on the ground 5. Once the bale has been expelled, pressure is again applied to the hydraulic cylinder 22 to pull the piston rod 23, thereby pivoting the tail gate 10 downwardly and causing the belts 11 to return to their starting position so that a new baling process can begin. The controlling of each of the